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2421 VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Regulation Required for Vocational and Non-Vocational School Districts that Established Vocational-Technical Education Programs

A. Vocational-Technical Instruction

Vocational-technical education instruction has been designed to prepare pupils for life skills and paid employment as skilled workers, technicians or paraprofessionals in recognized occupations and in new or emerging occupations; to prepare pupils for enrollment in advanced or highly skilled vocational-technical education programs; and to assist pupils in making informed and meaningful occupational choices; or to achieve any combination of the above objectives.

Structured Learning Experiences (SLE)

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.2 - Career Education and Counseling, interested pupils may voluntarily select Structured Learning Experiences (SLE) to complement their classroom instruction. All SLE shall adhere to applicable State and Federal child labor laws and other regulations of the Federal and State Departments of Education and Labor.

The structured learning experience:

1. May be either paid or unpaid, depending on the type of activities in which the pupil is involved;
2. May or may not be sponsored by a school district;
3. May include, but not be limited to: apprenticeships; community service; cooperative education service learning; internships; job shadowing; school-based experiences; vocational pupil organization activities; volunteer activities; and/or Work Experience Career Exploration Program (WECEP).

The responsibility of the school district is dependent upon the type of SLE in which the pupil is participating.

1. If the district sponsors the SLE or provides arrangements for a pupil's SLE, the district shall provide the appropriate pupil supervision using school district staff and/or contracted services. The district will maintain the pupil's records reflecting the SLE if the SLE is sponsored by the district. The district shall be responsible for providing other services as required by rule or statute.
2. If the district does not sponsor the SLE, the employer is responsible for supervision of the pupil on the training site, pursuant to applicable fair labor practices and child labor



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laws. The district may elect to provide this supervision.

Structured Learning Experience activities are divided into two categories:

1. Hazardous - Some training sites may potentially expose the pupil to conditions considered hazardous by the Federal or State Departments of Education. Only pupils who are enrolled in a cooperative education course of study, conducted by an appropriately licensed person, may be placed in a training site considered hazardous. The district will adhere to the Fair Labor Standards Act and all child labor laws when placing pupils on a training site considered hazardous.
2. Non-Hazardous - Pupils placed in training sites deemed non-hazardous shall be supervised by the appropriately licensed teacher or other designated district staff member holding the appropriate license/certification.

B. Content Standards For Vocational Instruction

The content of vocational-technical instruction shall be developed and conducted in accordance with the following standards to assure soundness and quality:

1. The program of instruction shall reflect contemporary industry-endorsed skill standards and knowledge required to master the occupational competencies;
2. The program of instruction shall be developed and conducted in consultation with employers and other individuals or groups of individuals (such as local advisory committees) having skills in and substantive knowledge of the occupations or the occupational programs included in the instruction;
3. The program of instruction shall be sufficiently extensive in duration and intensive within a scheduled unit of time to enable the pupil to master the occupational competencies;
4. The program of instruction shall combine and coordinate classroom instruction with field, shop, laboratory, structured learning experience, apprenticeship, or other experiences that are appropriate to the competencies of the career clusters; and
5. The program of instruction shall be supervised, directed, or coordinated by persons meeting teacher preparation and licensing requirements of N.J.A.C. 6A:9 - Professional Licensure and Standards when the program is offered at the secondary level.

C. Vocational Pupil Organizations

The program of instruction may include activities of vocational pupil organizations, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:19-6.10, which are an integral part of the vocational-technical instruction offered.



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D. Employment Placement Standards

The Commissioner of Education shall establish and notify the district of annual minimum employment placement standards for pupils enrolled in vocational-technical education programs and the districts shall be responsible for meeting minimum job placement standards for vocational-technical pupils.

The district shall report employment placement rates of vocational-technical education pupils to the Department of Education on forms provided by the Department of Education.

Vocational-technical pupils in the following categories will be considered for employment placements:

1. Vocational-technical pupils who have been placed full-time in the occupation or related field in which they were trained;
2. Vocational-technical pupils who have passed occupational competency tests for entry level employment skills and have entered the military service;
3. Vocational-technical pupils entering full-time postsecondary education in the program area or related field in which they were trained;
4. Special needs pupils who have met alternative assessments for occupational competencies or individualized education program (IEP) assessments established by the district;
5. Vocational-technical pupils who are employed a minimum of twenty hours per week in the occupation or related field in which they were trained and who are enrolled in postsecondary education for a minimum of twelve credit hours per academic year in the program area or related field in which they were trained; and
6. Vocational-technical pupils who are employed part-time an average of twenty hours per week or more in the occupation or related field in which they were trained.

Vocational-technical pupils not considered for placements include:

1. Vocational-technical pupils who are unemployed;
2. Vocational-technical pupils who work fewer than twenty hours per week; and
3. Vocational-technical pupils who are employed in an occupation or field not related to their training.

All other pupils shall not be included in calculations for job placements.



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If the district reports placement rates below the established employment placement standards for two consecutive years, the district shall be required to submit a two-year program improvement plan to overcome program deficiencies.

1. Occupational competency assessment data shall be included in the development of the program improvement plan.
2. The program improvement plan shall be submitted within ninety days following written notification by the Commissioner, or his or her designee, that such a plan is required.
3. Prior to the submission of the program improvement plan to the Commissioner, the plan shall be approved by the Board and submitted to the County Superintendent for review and approval.
4. The County Superintendent shall periodically review the progress of the district in meeting the objectives and in implementing the program improvement plan.
5. The district shall have two years following approval of the plan by the Commissioner to complete remediation and to overcome program deficiencies.
6. In preparing the program improvement plan, the district shall review its programs based upon factors including, but not limited to, vocational-technical pupil mastery of occupational competencies, inappropriate or inadequate training, pupil recruitment, placement deficiencies, market sensitivity, and program cost effectiveness. Other indicators which might influence job placement include, but are not limited to, inadequate pay scales, economic trends and fluctuations in transportation difficulties, and existing and unanticipated local or regional occupational supply and demand.

If the district fails to implement the program improvement plan or fails to overcome program deficiencies for meeting minimum employment placement standards within two years of approval of the plan by the Commissioner of Education, the County Superintendent, in consultation with the Director of the Office of School-to-Career and College Initiatives, may recommend that the Commissioner issue an order requiring the district to show cause as to why the program should not be discontinued.

E. Local Applications For Funds

The district may participate in grant programs pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-2.2 by applying for such funds to the New Jersey Department of Education on forms provided by the Department of Education.